

- Introduction

- Overall comments:

- HSUS is a national animal welfare organization, but while we are a national organization, we have nearly 90,000 lowans that are members of HSUS and support our efforts.

- In 2009, 32 states considered bills dealing with puppy mills. New laws were enacted, so far, in 9 states (Arizona, Connecticut, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Washington).

Plus the California legislature has passed a bill that is currently awaiting the Governor's signature, and Illinois passed a resolution establishing a task force to propose legislation for next year.

And bills are still very much alive in Massachusetts, Ohio and Wisconsin. So clearly this is an issue that has captured the nation's attention, and state legislatures are being urged by their constituents to take action.

- The most interesting trend over the last two years is that four states (and five if you count the California bill that Gov. Schwarzenegger hasn't yet signed) have enacted a cap on the number of breeding dogs that can be kept by any puppy mill. The cap has been strongly supported by localities where puppy mill raids have occurred, as they recognize the extreme costs of providing care for extreme numbers of animals. And it has been supported by our own experience in assisting local agencies across the country with these raids.

- With 403 USDA licensed "A" dealers, Iowa is third largest in the country, behind only Missouri and Oklahoma. There are only 4237 in the country, meaning Iowa alone makes up nearly 10 percent of the licensed breeders in the country.

- Mason-Dixon Polling and Research conduct a survey this year; asking two questions relating to puppy mills:

QUESTION: Do you support or oppose legislation that would give the state the authority to inspect puppy mills?

SUPPORT: 86%

QUESTION: Generally speaking, do you support or oppose state legislators' efforts to ensure humane treatment of animals, including increased penalties for abuse and providing adequate resources and authority for inspections and investigations concerning animal cruelty?

SUPPORT: 83%

Finally, HSUS has just created the Wilde Task Force which was developed solely to assist local law enforcement with addressing puppy mills through assistance with investigations, raids, temporary shelter, veterinary care and placement of dogs from substandard facilities. So far just this year alone, we have assisted in the removal and placement of more than 4,500 dogs from puppy mills across the country -- so there is help available to the states on this issue.